

# **East Jemez Resources Council Meeting**

*Meeting Minutes – February 7, 2002*

## **Welcome and Introductions – Neil Weber and Myron Gonzales (San Ildefonso Pueblo)**

Neil Weber opened the East Jemez Resources Council (Council) meeting by welcoming new attendees, facilitating introductions, and briefly reviewing the meeting agenda. The Council meeting agenda and attendance list is attached to the mailed copy of these minutes.

As discussed during the November 2, 2001 meeting, the first four agenda items of the Council meeting provided a review of the key activities of the Pajarito Plateau Watershed Partnership (PPWP). At the November meeting, the PPWP officially became a working group of the EJRC.

## **Pajarito Plateau Watershed Partnership**

### **Ken Mullen (LANL) and Maryann McGraw (NMED)**

The Pajarito Plateau Watershed Partnership was formed in 1999 to address regional watershed issues on the Pajarito Plateau from the crest of the Sierra de los Valles to the Rio Grande. The mission of the Partnership is to work together to protect, improve and restore quality of water on the Pajarito Plateau. A cooperative approach to watershed restoration is fundamental to the Partnership. A goal of the Partnership is to develop watershed restoration actions and strategies. Active members of this Partnership include the Bandelier National Monument, Los Alamos County, Santa Fe National Forest, San Ildefonso Pueblo, Cochiti Pueblo, New Mexico Environment Department, Los Alamos National Lab, Department of Energy, and DOE Citizens Advisory Board. The Partnership has received a Clean Water Act, Section 319 grant and is currently assembling a team for administering the grant.

## **Pajarito Plateau Watershed Partnership Watershed Assessment**

### **Sam Loftin and Kevin Buckley (LANL)**

The PPWP focuses on 31 watersheds on the east slope of the Jemez Mountains that extend from the Cochiti Reservoir to the Santa Clara Canyon. The area of interest covers about 10 square miles or 300,000 acres. Sam and Kevin have ranked the watersheds according to relative scores to provide a comparative measure of risk. The composite score for each watershed incorporates the following variables:

- steepness (average slope),
- stream density (stream length per watershed),
- burn severity (10 percent of the watershed in high burn severity = 3),
- road density (road length per watershed),
- presence or absence of rehabilitation efforts,
- percent of the watershed in piñon-juniper woodlands, and
- an archaeological site index.

The scores for each watershed were ranked and divided into risk groups of high, moderate and low. The watersheds in the high group were typically those heavily impacted by the Cerro Grande Fire. Several Council members expressed interest in continuing and expanding the assessment as part of the EJRC.

## **Pueblo Canyon Geomorphological Assessment**

### **Ralph Ford-Schmidt (NMED)**

Ralph has been directing a project to document and assess the fluvial geomorphology of lower Pueblo Canyon. The purpose of the study is to collect baseline data to characterize the current status and changing conditions of lower Pueblo Canyon. Ralph presented selected results from the initial baseline characterization of the canyon. This included the results for bank erosion rates, and transport rates of suspended and bed load sediments. Ralph hopes to expand his work into upper sections of Pueblo Canyon and into other canyons. A draft status report was released by NMED in January 2002. The PPWP has identified a set of criteria that are used to select drainages that are most at risk from erosion. Pueblo Canyon meets all of the criteria and is considered an ideal site for future studies.

## **Community Outreach and Volunteer Task Force**

### **John Hogan (LA Community Outreach and Volunteer Task Force)**

The Volunteer Task Force is a community-based and multi-agency effort to mitigate the effects of the Cerro Grande Fire and to improve the areas burned by the fire. Volunteer efforts have accounted for a total of 23,500 work hours in the burned areas. This includes 1) about 600 acres that were raked, seeded and mulched, 2) placement of 66,000 sandbags to protect against flooding, 3) construction and rehabilitation of 19 miles of trails, and 4) planting of 12,000 tree seedlings on 200 acres. The most effective rehabilitation treatment was hand seeding of grass species followed by the application of straw mulch. The Task Force maintains a website at [www.losalamos.com/mavtf](http://www.losalamos.com/mavtf).

## **Dome Area Management and Seeking Common Ground**

### **John Peterson (Santa Fe National Forest – Jemez District)**

The U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service are collaborating on a joint management plan for the Dome Area. This plan should be complete in 2 or 3 years.

John distributed a pamphlet produced by the Jemez Mountains Seeking Common Ground Project. The Project is a cooperative effort of private and public groups and individuals concerned with developing a comprehensive and cooperative approach to elk and habitat management in the Jemez Mountains. The goals of the Project are to develop better working relationships among all stakeholders leading to informed decision making, to develop solutions that balance local and regional needs, to provide quality management for healthy natural resources, to provide consistent, flexible long-term direction for elk management, and to resolve conflict between management of elk and other resources.

## **Valles Caldera National Preserve (VCNP)**

### **John Peterson (Santa Fe National Forest – Jemez District)**

The VCNP is currently managed by the Santa Fe National Forest on behalf of the VCNP Board of Trustees. It is currently closed to the public and one of the priorities is to prepare the VCNP for the safe handling of up to 1 million visitors per year. This includes repairs to roads, bridges, and water systems. The current plans also include elk hunting, including approximately 90 bull tags, in 2002. Cattle grazing, with up to 1500 head, may be reinitiated next spring, but the appropriate National Environmental Policy Act analysis and documentation must be completed first.

## **EJRC Cultural Resources Working Group Update**

### **Rory Gauthier (Bandelier National Monument).**

Rory Gauthier has been selected to serve as Chair of the Working Group for 2002. The subject of the last Working Group meeting was an update on cultural resources management work being planned and implemented in the region. At the meeting, LANL personnel invited regional cultural resources managers to observe actions taken to mitigate cultural resources sites associated with the land transfer project. The Forest Service has identified the scope of the Valle II project and will be conducting a cultural resources inventory of the project area. The Forest Service also inventoried the portion of Garcia Canyon affected by the Cerro Grande Fire. Bandelier National Monument will coordinate with the Forest Service to conduct cultural resources inventories of the NM State Road 4 corridor that will be treated under the Valle II project. In addition, the Monument is planning to repave the entrance road while preserving the historic Civilian Conservation Corps stonework that borders many sections of the road.

## **Roundtable Discussion – All**

### **Los Alamos National Laboratory**

Ken Mullen requested additional direction and feedback from the Council with respect to PPWP projects and direction on behalf of the new Working Group.

### **San Ildefonso Pueblo**

Myron Gonzales reported that San Ildefonso Pueblo is continuing to coordinate with DOE/NNSA, LANL, and Los Alamos County on the Conveyance and Transfer Project. San Ildefonso is also working to secure a contract with DOE/NNSA to assist LANL archaeologists in stabilizing cultural resources sites affected by the Cerro Grande Fire.

### **DOE/NNSA – Los Alamos Site Operations Office**

John Stetson reported that DOE/NNSA will hold a public meeting on February 26, 2002, regarding cultural resources mitigations under the Land Conveyance and Transfer Project.

### **Bandelier National Monument (BNM)**

Steve Bone reported that BNM is working on several environmental documents including a Wilderness Management Plan. BNM is also preparing to establish wildfire fuel breaks along NM State Road 4 as part of the Valle II project.

### **Pueblo de Cochiti**

Aaron Pecos and Sean Morning-Star from Pueblo de Cochiti reported that they were in the process of acquiring additional collars for monitoring the movement of elk and deer on Pueblo lands. They are also busy monitoring surface water and sediments as part of their on-going environmental program.

### **Santa Clara Pueblo**

Gilbert Tafoya introduced himself as new to the Santa Clara Pueblo Land Claims Director and expressed his interest in becoming more involved in EJRC meetings and activities as a means of increasing Santa Clara's participation in the regional resources management effort.

**Future Agenda Items and Closing – All**

The following topics were proposed as agenda items for the May 2, 2002, EJRC meeting:

- Review of EJRC Charter
- Update on the VCNP
- Update on the Cultural Resources Working Group